

The Poetical Gazette

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TO "THE ACADEMY."

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"The Poetry Society has been founded to nourish the love of Poetry in the heart of man. In a material age there is need to keep alive the imaginative side of human life . . . Local gatherings are held and are in contemplation to bring together the lovers of Poetry by recitals, by discussions, and in other ways to stimulate the love of the Poets, and to spread far and wide their message to man." — Lord Coleridge, President. (For other official details, see page 8.)

THE PRONUNCIATION OF CHAUCER

MUSIC OF WORDS

With regard to recent correspondence in *THE ACADEMY*, it is pertinent to quote from the reports of the lecture with which Mr. Daniel Jones, M.A., initiated the representation of the "Canterbury Tales" in the original pronunciation. The *Daily Graphic* said:—

The excellent educational work which is being carried on by the Poetry Recital Society was strikingly illustrated by a special recital given at the Boudoir Theatre, presided over by Lady Strachey.

The little private theatre at Earl's Court made a perfect mise-en-scène for such a recital. The tiny but classic stage, with its statue of the Venus of Milo, the graceful hangings, the "dim religious light," the atmosphere of culture and refinement that pervades the whole building—these make it a veritable temple of the arts.

Professor Daniel Jones, M.A., opened the proceedings with a lecture on "The Phonetics of Chaucer." He urged the importance of reading the older English poets in the way they would be read by their contemporaries. It might be contended that we derived sufficient enjoyment from Chaucer's works, even when read in accordance with modern standards. But the music was missing. It was something like reading a Cockney version of Tennyson.

A study of Old and Middle English would greatly assist the student of Chaucer. In the Middle Ages in England the Latin alphabet, introduced by the Romans, had superseded the ancient Runic characters of the Anglo-Saxons, and with it had come the Latin form of pronunciation. As a general rule, the Old English speech-sounds were practically identical with similar sounds in the Latin. All through the Middle Ages Latin had been preserved as a spoken language by the Church, and this fact was of considerable assistance to the student of Old English literature and poetry.

There were, of course, exceptional cases; and these were largely accounted for by the introduction of French words and French methods of spelling in the years following the Norman invasion.

At a period when few were able to write, words would have a strongly phonetic value. Rhyme endings must have been intended for the ear, and not for the eye. It might safely be assumed, therefore, that in the case of an unknown vowel rhyming with a known vowel, that unknown vowel was of the same sound as the known.

As an illustration of the Chaucerian system of phonetics, Professor Jones recited the first eighteen

lines of the prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," and the whole of the poem on "Truth."

Lady Margaret Sackville followed with three translations of Roumanian ballads, which were declaimed with magnificent dramatic effect. Some selections from "A Shropshire Lad" were read by Lady Strachey, and Mr. Perceval Graves—universally known as the author of "Father O'Flynn"—recited some Irish, Gaelic, and Welsh poems in the original metre.

A lengthy report in the *Times* was copied into many English, American, and Australian papers, and quite recently we received a cutting of the account as it appeared in the *Rangoon Gazette*. The *Dundee Advertiser* report gave some additional details of the lecture, which we quote to supplement the above article.

The lecturer, after claiming that a knowledge of the correct pronunciation of Chaucer was essential to the proper enjoyment of the music of his poetry, went on to show that it was possible to obtain such knowledge and to explain the principles of the study. The study began with the values of the Latin alphabet, which was adopted by Anglo-Saxon or Old English in place of its own Runic characters, and these values could be ascertained from five sources—the comparative phonetics of the modern Romance tongues, the direct statements of the Latin grammarians, the transliteration of Latin words into Greek and vice versa, the phonetic spelling found in popular inscriptions and texts written by uneducated people, and the principle known as the principle of continuity.

From Latin the study must proceed to Old English, where again there are five sources of information—the pronunciation of the modern Germanic languages, transliteration of Germanic words into Latin and Greek, the phonetic transcription of Greek into Old English, found in a tenth century manuscript at Oxford, the modern English dialects, and the variations of spelling found in the case of words falling between two Latin sounds, and, therefore, spelt now in one way, now in another, and now by some device for representing both sounds. From Old English the study passed to Middle English, the language of Chaucer.

In Chaucer's day spelling was phonetic, writers and readers being few, and having no standard; but the Church's use of Latin as a living language preserved the value of most Latin letters, and, with certain exceptions, among them those caused by the Normans' introduction of French words and methods of spelling, letters associated with Latin values maintained those values. When Chaucer wrote, for instance, "knocke," it meant that the initial *k* was sounded. That was its Latin value, and if it had not been sounded Chaucer would not have written it. Rhyme, again, was a sure means of determining pronunciation. Poetry being often recited than read, there were no "rhymes to the eye"; and finding "was" rhymed to the Anglo-French "eas" (ease), we knew that "was" was not pronounced "wəz," but with

an *a* as in "father," and a sibilant *a* as in "pass." The principle of continuity, again, which studied the change in sounds by the structure of the organs of speech, enabled us to trace back our word "bone" to "bawn," more or less the sound it still held in Shakespeare's day, something between its present sound and the "ban" or "baan" of the twelfth century. Metre also played its part in determining pronunciation.

REALISTIC CHAUCER.

Of the actual "Canterbury Tales" Recital, we give the following reports:—

"If pilgrims to Canterbury set out to-day from the Tabard Inn, in Southwark, they would not present quite so gay and varied an appearance nor include so many interesting and varied types as those that amble through Chaucer's spacious tales. And a very vivid glimpse of the age of Chaucer was afforded at the Boudoir Theatre by the Poetry Recital Society in the dramatic representation of certain parts of the great poem.

"One was struck, for instance, by the number of country figures brought before us; one realised what an intense rural life there was then. The knight, the squire, the yeoman, the prioress, the franklyn let us see where the centre of gravity was before that cruel rush to the towns began.

"This rural character of the persons (the *Daily News* pointed out) was emphasised by the pronunciation of the players, which, in spite of its Latin turns, smacked far more, with its broad vowels and thundering consonants, of the present day yokel than the present day cockney. This pronunciation is in the nature of an experiment. Mr. D. Jones and Professor Furnivall, working back from the known Elizabethan and taking guidance from the Latin vowels and the rhymes (strictly phonetic at a time when spelling was fluid and poetry was more often spoken than read), have arrived at something which has the great merit of seeming true and not a scientific patchwork. Certainly the poetry gained—flowed with a freer rhythm, had a fine trumpet ring, seemed contemporaneous, and not a museum relic.

"The reciting was quite excellent. In one or two cases the meaning was buried behind the strange vocalisation, but Mr. D. Jones as the Pardon, Mr. G. Noel-Armfield as the Clerk of Oxenford, and Miss M. Patricchio as the Prioress, acted and spoke to perfection. Fine as was Mr. B. Macdonald, who as the Nun's Priest told the tale of Chanticleer and the Fox with rich humour and mock pathos, there was a little too much of the theatre about his gestures. Mr. D. Jones gave to the Pardon's Tale of the three rogues subtlety and fire."

From the *Daily Graphic's* account of this interesting performance we extract the following:—

"For probably the first time for 500 years, the English of Chaucer was heard upon a London stage, when, under the auspices of the Poetry Recital Society, a series of selections from Chaucer's prologue to the 'Canterbury Tales,' 'Pardon's Tale,' and 'Nun's Priest's Tale,' were rendered in costume at the Boudoir Theatre. Every effort had been made to secure the correct mediæval setting. The costumes were designed from the illustrations in the Ellesmere MSS. of the 'Canterbury Tales,' and the wayside inn depicted on the stage was of a truly primitive type of construction.

"It is to the enthusiasm and enterprise of Mr. Daniel Jones that we owe this interesting experiment. Mr. Jones, who is an accomplished philologist, sees no reason why the poems of Chaucer should not read as they are written. The difficulties are not of an insurmountable order, and, for the benefit of those who would like to try, Mr. Jones has written a brief pamphlet on the correct pronunciation.

"The visitor to the Boudoir Theatre could hardly fail to have been struck by one fact. It was at once a simpler and more melodious language that was heard than the English of to-day. The vowels received their full value,

The terminal 'e' was always sounded. 'K' was sounded in 'knight,' and 'w' in 'wrong.' There are people living to-day in the remoter country districts—people unspoiled by civilisation and contact with the life of great cities—who speak with just such an inflection.

"Mr. Jones may be congratulated on his pupils. The performers rose to their parts manfully. They gracefully evaded the many pitfalls that beset their path. Mr. G. Noel-Armfield was admirable as the Clerk of Oxford; Miss K. Gwynn made a vivacious wife of Bath, and Miss D. Wooldridge brought a delightful humour into her rendering of the passages."

We must also acknowledge the devoted services of Mr. O. Ballman (Knight), Mr. M. Macdonald (Squire), Dr. G. Coleman Young (Yeoman), who was also responsible for the music; Mr. F. Backett (Friar), Mr. W. C. McKechnie (Merchant), Mr. G. A. L. Heward (Man of Law), Mr. P. Bull (Franklyn), Mr. C. Bedford (Parson), Mr. J. D. Ashby (Summoner), and Miss M. Bull and Miss M. Owen (Serving Maids). Messrs. Fox made the effective costumes from designs taken from the Ellesmere MSS.

MR. FRANKFORT MOORE AND POETRY.

A meeting to form an active Centre in Hove and Brighton was held on Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 23, at Hoovelea, King's Road, Hove, by kind permission of the Misses Blake and Mortimer. The chair was taken by the Rev. Seymour Terry, who referred to the inspiring influence of poetry and the importance of the work that is carried on by the Poetry Society throughout the English-speaking world. The hon. director of the Society explained the great scope and many ramifications of the Society, which in various practical ways is seeking to promote a more general appreciation of the first and best of all the arts and to further "the art of speaking and reading verse."

Mr. Frankfort Moore proposed and Mr. Moreton Yorke seconded a resolution confirming the formation of a Brighton and Hove Centre of the Society, by means of which regular meetings will be provided for local members. The resolution was carried with acclamation, and Mr. Kyle moved that Mr. Frankfort Moore be elected president of the new Centre, with Miss Dorothy Aphorpe, to whose enthusiasm and organising capacity that successful meeting was due, as hon. secretary and treasurer. Miss Leech, one of the original Brighton members of the Society, seconded, and the resolution was agreed to.

Mr. Frankfort Moore gave a delightful address, incidentally mentioning that while Mr. Kyle had referred to his novels he had illustrated the hard lot of the poet by ignoring the fact that he (Mr. Moore) perpetrated a volume of verse thirty-five years ago and had another one fresh from the press that day. The famous novelist proceeded to point out that while there were societies by the score for encouraging taste in painting and by the hundred for developing taste in music, the cultivation of poetic taste had been neglected until now, although poetry had done more for religion, liberty, and humanity than all the other arts. Poetry, the heaven-born maid, had been degraded into a mendicant singer, whose voice was scarcely heard before the policeman critic came up and ordered her to move on. The Poetry Society asked them to extend their homage to this dethroned queen, to sit at her feet and draw comfort and inspiration from her, to make their friends appreciate her better, to admire her form and voice, and, above all, the divine beauty of her face. In fact, the Society was the fairy godmother of this heavenly Cinderella, bringing her out and introducing her to the ordinary commonplace community, making them her humble ardent worshippers and causing them to feel that life is fuller and more beautiful by association with her. Their duty and pleasure as members of the Society was to make known to others the joy poetry had been to them.

POETRY AND MUSIC

HINTS TO LYRIC WRITERS.

We have pleasure in publishing another selection of poems suitable for music chosen by Mr. Alfred Perceval Graves, jun., director of the Songwriters' Agency and Recitations Bureau, from the work of members submitted to him for the purpose.

Mr. Graves, who is responsible for the comments upon each lyric, wishes to say in general criticism that "the bulk of the original poems submitted are too melancholy to make use of. Lyric writers should make greater efforts to condense. The long song is not popular. A further point is the lack of originality of theme. I should like more realism, provided it is not too grim. And in every case the sentiment should ring true. Finally, in so many of the poems submitted there is an absence of climax—one never wants a melody to peter out like a damp squib. It is desired to show publishers that it is quite possible to supply composers with lyrics that are not wishy-washy, over-spiced, or ultra-domesticated drivel—that the words of songs should be virile or graceful poetry."

We trust that lyric writers will benefit from these remarks.

LOVELAND.*

[The strength and grimness of this little poem should appeal to composer, interpreter, and audience alike. Nowadays the dramatic song makes a wider appeal to London musical amateurs than heretofore. An excellent example of the kind is to be found in "The Tryst," by Sibelius, Finland's leading composer.]

Loveland, alas! has locusts,
Pestilence and pain,
Storms that lay the lilies,
Wind and rain.

Marshes without a moon,
Where black Death hangs and hovers,
Forests where bleach the bones
Of poor blind lovers.

Nay, nay, the lilies in loveland
Never wither and die;
And locusts have never darkened
Its azure sky.

These were not bones of lovers
In your dark dell;
Fool, you had lost your way;
And that was—Hell.

RONALD CAMPBELL MACFIE.

THE DESERT FLUTE.

[These impressionist verses, which appeared in the *Sphinx*, a Cairo periodical, lend themselves readily to a musical setting, with flute obligato, and should find favour with soprano vocalists.]

Thro' the boughs of dark acacias
Gleamed the stars like golden fruit,
Softly, from the purple distance,
Strayed the echo of a flute.

'Twas the wild Wind of the desert
With his lips upon a reed,
All his love and hopeless longing
Throbbing thro' the hollow weed.

Never song of Persian bulbul
Thrilled with magic so divine,
Flooding all the brain with rapture,
Pulsing thro' the heart like wine.

* From "Granite Dust," fifty poems by Ronald Campbell Macfie.

Far across the trackless desert
Bounded by the sapphire sky,
Evermore that music lures me
And I follow till I die!

HELEN E. HOLLAND.

SECOND THOUGHTS.

[A lyric of the unpretentious, light drawing-room-comedy order, which will make a dainty and effective song.]

In sad anguish now I languish
All the livelong day,
For I'm smitten with a certain
Little girl called May.
Broken-hearted when we parted,
All that I could say—
"To the river now I'll wander,
Cruel little May!"
Death by water would be slaughter,
So on earth I'll stay,
To discover soon another
Girl as sweet as May.

ARTHUR F. DICKENS.

LEAVE ME NOT EVER.

[For my fourth selection, I return to Alfred Williams' "Songs in Wiltshire,"* "Leave me not ever" is an exquisite poem, which needs a Claude Debussy to do full justice to it. A mere pianoforte arrangement would be inadequate to reveal the beauties of the text. The poem requires a setting for large orchestra.]

The full tide turning, half its journey done,
The evening poplar sighing above the river,
Showers of arrows from the setting sun,
Leave me not ever!

Long purple shadows over hushing hills,
The drowsy bee's late note, the night-wind's shiver,
The low-breathed litany of dying bells;
Leave me not ever!

The twilight trembling over cooling springs,
Heaven's arched glory gone unto the Giver,
And darkness with obliterating wings;
Leave me not ever!

Dew on the bending grasses, and a dream,
Wavings of sleep upon the still river,
And broken brightness of the lunar beam;
Leave me not ever!

A cloud of anger was above my head,
Love's truest triumph follows the forgiver,
The night is waning and the morn is red,
Leave me not ever!

ALFRED WILLIAMS.

RECITALS AT THE PASSMORE EDWARDES INSTITUTE.—We have pleasure in announcing that a series of Poetry Recitals will be given by the Society at the Passmore Edwardes Institute, Tavistock Place, on Saturday afternoons, beginning on Jan. 14. In order to secure a popular attendance, the general charge for admission will be 1s., or six tickets (available on any date a recital is given) for 5s., with a limited number of reserved seats for 2s. 6d., or one guinea for the series of ten. Centres are invited to contribute to the programmes, and to take an active part in promoting the success of the recitals. Further details of arrangements, including the names of those taking part in the January recitals, will be given next month.

All cheques and postal orders in payment of subscriptions, etc., should be made payable to The Poetry Society, and crossed, "Barclay and Co., Fleet Street Branch—Not Negotiable."

* "Songs in Wiltshire," by Alfred Williams (Erskine MacDonald, 17 Surrey Street, W.C., 5s. net.)

THE POETRY HOUR

Suggestions for a month's reading and learning.

Week ending December 10:— Learn.

The Revenge (Tennyson) ... And the sun went down—
So they watched what the
end would be.

Sudden Light (D. G. Rossetti) ... Whole Poem
Love among the Ruins (R. Browning) Whole Poem
Ask me no more (Tennyson) ... Whole Poem

Week ending December 17:—

Herve Riel (R. Browning) ... Whole Poem
Home Thoughts from Abroad (R.
Browning) ... Whole Poem
The Brook (Tennyson) ... Whole Poem
A Farewell (Tennyson) ... Whole Poem

Week ending December 24:—

Locksley Hall (Tennyson) ... In the Spring—O the
barren, barren shore.

Go from me (E. B. Browning) ... Sonnet
Thyrsis (Matthew Arnold) ... Whole Poem
Prospectus (R. Browning) ... Whole Poem

Week ending December 31:—

The Guardian Angel (R. Browning) Whole Poem
Amelia (C. Patmore) ... Whole Poem
Up-hill (C. G. Rossetti) ... Whole Poem
Epilogue to Asolando (R. Browning) Whole Poem

All the above poems may be found in "The Golden Treasury."

Dramatic Lyrics. By JOHN GURDON. (Elkin Mathews.) In this charming little book of poems Mr. Gurdon shows that he possesses a command of words and a mastery of metre which occasionally remind us of Swinburne. The sense of the beauty of words, the Greek influence, the pagan spirit all recall that master of lyrical poetry. For example, take the following excerpt from "Nirvana":—

So might I rest for ever
With music flowing o'er me
In liquid streams, and rainbow gleams
Of beauty float before me.
In veil of silvery showers
The old tears should pearly shine,
And life's foredone endeavour
Be one deep anodyne
To lull the languid hours,
To drown my soul in dreams.

I crave no crown of glory,
Who seek but cease from craving.
Is one thing worth, on all the earth,
The losing or the saving?
We are born, we die, and after
Oblivion scattereth
Her poppy o'er the story
Of birth and love and death,
The life that is but laughter
Of some encyclopedic mirth.

This shows the same tragic fatalism that breathes through "The Garden of Proserpine"—

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

These "Dramatic Lyrics" are full of the pure spirit of poetry, and Mr. Gurdon has a flow of words and a command of metre which makes us almost wonder whether the same thing may not be said of him as was said of Swinburne, that there is too much of certain qualities—melody preferred to harmony—harmony in the place of thought.

THE POETRY SOCIETY IN AMERICA

We have particular pleasure in announcing that the Society, which has already branches at work in Australia and South Africa, is about to carry its organisation into the United States. Mr. Maurice Browne, who is to act as general secretary in America, sailed from Liverpool for Boston on the "Winifredian" on Saturday, Nov. 19, and will start active work on behalf of the Society immediately on landing. An influential meeting will be held in Boston, and in the following week in New York, where Mr. Browne will work from the Shaw Agency, 12, Charles Street, New York.

Mr. Browne is thoroughly qualified for the important work he has undertaken. He is the eldest son of the well-known educationalists, the Rev. F. H. Browne, for many years headmaster of Ipswich School, and Mrs. Browne, of Clovelly, Keppelstone, Eastbourne. He was an Exhibitioner of Winchester and Senior Classical scholar of Peterhouse, Cambridge. He is the author of a number of volumes, including "Songs of Exile," "Job; a Dramatic Poem," "The Nature and Formation of Poetry," etc., and has travelled widely in France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sicily, Egypt, Cape Colony, India, Kashmir, Burmah, etc., and is the author of a chapter on the Victorian Era and Modern Writers in a new edition of the late Professor Morley's "First Sketch of English Literature." In late years, he has lectured widely on the lives of great writers, paying particular attention to poets and poetry, and giving readings of poetry. His work in this direction received the commendation of Sir Robert Ball, Lord Willingdon, the Bishop of Auckland, New Zealand, and many others. It will interest American readers to know that Mr. Browne is engaged to be married to Miss Ellen von Volkenburg, of Chicago, whose renderings of modern plays have won great attention recently in the United States.

The Society regards this peaceful invasion of America as of vast importance and significance, tending to the unification of the English-speaking peoples, and emphasising the one common bond between them. The American branch of the Poetry Society will be an integral part of the Society and its ramifications throughout the English-speaking world, members being as much part of the organisation as London members are, and it is felt that in poetry more than in anything else the binding influence of a common language and sentiment will be found, that it affords the one universal link irrespective of diversity of politics, religion, climate, and national ideals, and that the Poetry Society is the one organisation which, independent of these other factors, can be extended wherever the English language is spoken and read.

A MEMBER sends us the following interesting letter, which we hope Centres will act upon:—

"I am compiling a list of poems dealing with human life from the cradle to the grave, and would welcome the co-operation of fellow-members of the Poetry Society. Members could best do this by having a Centre meeting set apart for the reading of such poems. I would presume that ample notice would be given to enable members to hunt up suitable contributions, and that after the meeting the local secretary would send me a list of the poems thus obtained. Naturally, well-known pieces such as Shakespeare's 'Seven Ages' and Wordsworth's 'Ode to Immortality' are too well-known for it to be necessary to include them, and members would be expected to make a wider search and to dig out less familiar but equally apposite poems."

This suggestion is a capital one, and we shall be glad to forward to the writer any poems sent in by individual members or through local centres.

POETICAL GIFTS

THE season of Christmas is once more upon us, and we shall be wondering how we can remember our friends in an effective (and perforce, to most of us) an inexpensive way. We impressed upon our readers last year the futility of sending Christmas cards, which are now ordered in batches, and do not appeal to the individual. The custom is now an "ancient form through which the spirit breathes no more," but the publishers at this season are providing excellent substitutes in the form of dainty and cheap reprints of standard favourites from the great writers.

Messrs. Ouseley and Co., 6, Fleet Lane, Farringdon Street, publish "The Little Keepsake Series"—booklets prettily bound in yapp Persian, and of a handy pocket size. For 1s. the worshipper of the wisdom of Omar Khayyam can carry a copy of the Rubaiyat in his waist-coat pocket, and the sentimental maiden may keep a dainty brown leather edition of "Sonnets from the Portuguese" ever next her heart. Messrs. Ouseley also publish an anthology compiled by D. R. Broadbent (5s. net), garnished with photographs of the poets and beautifully bound in yapp Persian.

Messrs. Foulis and Co., 23, Bedford Street, W.C., supply delightful little booklets at 6d. each. In the "London series" can be obtained "The Blessed Damozel," "The Dream of Gerontius," "Rabbi Ben Ezra," and other reprints in charming decorative wrappers, while the London booklets, a delightful series of reprints, exquisitely illustrated, including the old favourites, "Rab and his Friends" and "Dr. Marigold's Prescription," possess the great advantage of containing their own envelopes, and thus doing away with all the trouble of wrapping.

The famous house of Tuck is in the fashion, too, issuing a dainty decorative series of "Crystal Thoughts from the Poets," including selections from Adelaide Proctor, Nora Hopper, Burns, and other poets, the six booklets being supplied in a suitable cardboard case.

The Dainty Volume Library, published by Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd. (2s. 6d. net), contains some attractively presented volumes, bound in gilt lambskin, most appropriate for poetical gift purposes. One of the series, for example, is the Rev. Stopford Brooke's capable study of Clough, Arnold, Rossetti, and Morris, which should find a place on the poetry shelves of all libraries. His discernment and clever interpretation of these four poets renders his work of unfailing interest.

The Broadbent Treasures (Albert Broadbent, Manchester) are charming little booklets, embodying selections from the works of all the well-known poets, and can be obtained for the small sum of 3d. each. The Whittier Treasury is selected by the Countess of Portsmouth, and contains the best poems of that favourite poet. This series includes "A Treasury of Consolation," "A Treasury of Love," and "A Treasury of Devotional Poems," all well chosen and eminently suitable for Christmas souvenirs.

Messrs. George Harrap and Co. publish at 1s. a series entitled "The Poets Day by Day"—pretty little booklets containing quotations from Tennyson and other great poets for every day in the year.

"The Book of the Seasons" (George Allen and Co., 5s. net) is an anthology of verses appropriate to the four seasons of the year, arranged by A. B. Dewar. It is daintily bound, and charmingly illustrated by Margaret Tarrant, and should prove a most welcome gift for any poetry-lover.

"The Small People" (arranged by Thomas Burke—Chapman and Hall) and "The Children's Way" (arranged by Mrs. P. A. Barnett—Jarrold and Sons) are anthologies of verse about children, and should appeal to parents and all child-lovers. They illustrate, too, how poetry helps us to understand and appreciate the various phases of life.

V. E. J.

POETRY IN THE MAGAZINES

"The Smart Set" is always distinguished by some pretty and melodious verse, and the December issue is no exception, although we have read more dainty and expressive songs than Louise Fowler Gignoux, Aloysius Coll, Theodosia Garrison, John Kendrick Bangs, Henry Stuart Dudley, and others contribute this month. We find Elizabeth Minot's "Anne Hathaway's Garden" too charming to miss quoting:—

When Shakespeare would a-wooing go,
Through lane and woodland roaming,
Methinks for him the merle trilled low,
The stream with sweeter song did flow,
While daffodillies, quaint to see,
In yellow gowns danced on the lea.

Fair daffodils!

Then primroses and cowslips pale
O'erhung the brook and starred the vale,
And violets in purple hue
Beneath his eye drew life anew,

When Shakespeare went a-wooing!

When Shakespeare would a-wooing go,
Within her twilight garden,
Should not the faint musk roses know,
And eglantine the fairer blow?
Did rosemary "Remembrance" cry,
With fragrant breath as he passed by?

Sweet rosemary!

What whispered lavender and thyme
Of sunny days and wedding chime?
What secrets told the breeze that day,
That echo still from far away,
Of Shakespeare and his wooing?

AN OLD LADY'S READING.

In the *Cornhill* for December Mrs. W. Y. Sellars has a gossip paper entitled "Some Recollections," in which W. E. Henley is introduced as a patient of Professor (now Lord) Lister, in Edinburgh Infirmary. Here Henley, who had suffered much from his earliest years, was laid up for many months, and turned his experience into the striking poetry now known as "In Hospital," in which Lister is described vividly in Sonnet X. While in the Infirmary Mr. Henley became acquainted, and was soon intimate, with Robert Louis Stevenson, and in the Hospital Sketches there is a sonnet, "Apparition," which is a very vivid characterisation of that elf-like genius as he then appeared. "Deacon Brodie," the play written by Henley and Stevenson years afterwards, is closely associated with these Edinburgh days. Mrs. Sellars continues: "Mr. Henley, after the recovery of his health, did not stay very long in Edinburgh. . . . He was a striking-looking man, florid and rough-hewn, and he seemed strong and vigorous, in spite of his lameness and of all he had gone through and suffered." A pertinent recollection of Edinburgh relates to Mrs. Cunningham, widow of the Scotch judge. "A visit to her was always a refreshment to body and soul," Mrs. Sellars says. "I remember I was much struck by the way in which she read family prayers in the morning; it gave one the impression of listening to something one had never heard before, the well-known words becoming, as it were, new in her clear articulation and sympathetic tones. . . . Lord Rosebery, in his admirable and well-timed advice that school-children should have far more attention paid to their reading aloud in an articulate and intelligent way, would have been quite satisfied with the manner in which this too much neglected art was discharged by this dear old lady, whose like we shall not see again."

Owing to the General Election, Miss Lloyd's lecture at Hornsey Central Library has been postponed from the 17th inst.—the day before the poll in that division—to a date to be announced later.

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLIFTON.

A pleasant evening was arranged on Wednesday, November 9, by the combined efforts of the Poetry Society in Clifton and the Arts Club. By kind invitation of the Arts Club, the Poetry Society was entertained at the Fine Arts, and in their turn its members delighted their entertainers by an excellent programme of poetry and music. Mrs. Rogers, who is well known to lovers of recitation, gave (by request) Rossetti's "Blessed Damozel," and Miss Parsons selections from Browning. Mrs. Rose gave several good original recitations, which were much appreciated by the audience. Much applause was won by Miss M. Maggs's delicate and sympathetic rendering of "The Forsaken Merman," by Matthew Arnold. Miss Effie Almond recited with much expression original verses by Mrs. Butler, and in the unavoidable absence of Miss Eileen Hedley Hill, Miss E. S. Fraser secured an encore by her rendering of patriotic verses. The Rev. Tabor Davies and Mr. George Holloway also gave much pleasure by their excellent recitations. The musical part of the programme was supplied by Miss Maud Wingate, who contributed several charming compositions of her own, Miss Nelly Gardner, who sang with much expression two songs, one of which (composed by Miss Wingate) was given for the first time in public, and Dr. Rose, who delighted the audience with Hungarian songs. The programme was arranged by Miss Nott, Felixstowe, Clifton, local hon. secretary of the Poetry Society.

HAMPSTEAD.

On Tuesday, November 15, the evening was devoted to poems by Irish and Scotch writers. Well-chosen selections from Thomas Moore, Charles Lever, Moira O'Neill, S. O'Sullivan, Alex. Roger, Scott, and Campbell, afforded a pleasing variety, and were much appreciated.

Owing to the General Election and the Christmas holidays, the next meeting is deferred until Tuesday, January 3, when the members will meet as usual at 150, Finchley Road, and read poems relating to Christmastide and the New Year. The local hon. secretary, Miss E. Vaughan Jenkins, 31, Antrim Mansions, South Hampstead, N.W., will be pleased to hear from any ladies or gentlemen desirous of attending the Hampstead meetings. They may join the Society through the local secretary.

KENSINGTON.

At the first November meeting Mr. Robert Stephenson gave a very valuable address on elocution and the technique of voice production. On November 26 Miss Festing gave an "At Home" at 56, Queen's Gate Terrace, which was largely attended. Miss Festing's kindness was much appreciated, and a miscellaneous programme of readings was greatly enjoyed. Such social gatherings are most valuable in developing the friendly atmosphere and good fellowship of Centre meetings.

The Kensington meetings for December are:—9th inst., at Miss Rayson's, 38, Hogarth Road, Earl's Court, S.W., 5 p.m.; 17th inst., at 27, Scarsdale Villas, W., 5 p.m.

S. HAMPSTEAD.

At the meeting of the South Hampstead Centre on November 26, Mr. Fischer Sobell explained the objects of the Society for the benefit of the many present to whom the whole idea was new. He illustrated his remarks by giving a fine reading of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," and Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci." The members subsequently read "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast," and the following were nominated to the local Council: Mrs. Bradgate, Mrs. Henry Steadman, Mr. Gordner-James, Mr. Spiegel, and Mr. Fischer Sobell. The next meeting will be held on January 14 at 3.30 p.m., when Tennyson's "Maud" will be read.

NORTH LONDON CENTRE.

The members of the North London Centre met on Thursday, November 24, to read and discuss "The Works of the Poets of the Latter Nineteenth Century." Mr. Wise, the vice-president, took the chair, and, after introducing the subject for the evening, read a charming little poem, "To a Waterfowl," by the American poet, W. C. Bryant. The poets brought into discussion by various members included Browning, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and Meredith. Though the attendance was small, the meeting was felt to have been both profitable and enjoyable.

The subject for the next meeting, which will be held on Thursday, December 15, is to be "The Works of John Keats," introduced by a paper by Mr. Nathan. Meetings are being held this session at the White House Restaurant, 3, Stroud Green Road, Finsbury Park.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE.

In connection with this Centre, a Poetic Drama Circle and a teaching class will be formed. The next meeting will be held on Dec. 7, at 1, Palmeira Avenue, by permission of Miss Hollis, and the ordinary Centre meetings will be held fortnightly thereafter. Miss Apthorpe, the local hon. organising secretary, will be glad if intending members will communicate with her at 26, Wilbury Gardens, Hove.

PRODUCTION OF A POETICAL PLAY.

We have pleasure in announcing that effect is to be given to Lady Margaret Sackville's proposal that the Society should identify itself with the production of poetical plays. At Lady Margaret's suggestion, a start will be made with Swinburne's "Loctrine," by arrangement with Mr. Watts-Dunton, and anyone wishing to take part in the production is asked to notify Headquarters during the current month. From the volunteers the cast will be selected by Mr. Martin Harvey at an audition to be held in January. The players will be expected to provide their own costumes.

AN ATTRACTIVE CHILDREN'S PARTY.

The Baroness de Bertouch is responsible for another delightful scheme for aiding the funds of the Society and providing an unique entertainment. Under the auspices of the Society, a children's party will be held on Twelfth Night at the Cecil Hotel. A number of ladies associated with the Society will act as hostesses, and will be assisted by Miss Lily Brayton, Miss Hilda Trevelyan, Miss Marjorie Bowen, and others, who will preside at the tea-tables, while the distinctive feature of the entertainment will be the telling of fairy-tales and poetry by eminent authors and entertainers. For various reasons, the party will be held in the afternoon of January 6, and admission will be by invitation only. We invite members to make this novel event known and to co-operate in making it a success. Suggestions will be welcomed, but they must be received at an early date, for the final arrangements will be completed in about a week, when invitation forms, containing full details and a list of the hostesses from whom tickets may be obtained, will be ready. The tickets will be 5s. each, or family tickets to admit five for one guinea.

The attendance at the Browning lecture given by Dr. Boas at King's College on November 4 was very disappointing. The learned lecturer's brilliant and illuminating exposition of the art and music poems of Browning was of great value and interest to all members, whether they are advanced students of poetry or only beginning to cultivate a taste for the first of all arts. Dr. Boas gave a masterly interpretation of the genius of Browning as expressed in some of his most representative poems, and we can only hope that the influence of his address will reach Centres through his suggestive remarks being made the basis of local discussion. We trust that members present who attend local meetings will have passed on the spirit of Dr. Boas's lecture, and enabled the Centres to benefit from his treatment of the greatest poet of modern times.

December 3, 1910

THE POETICAL GAZETTE.

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AUSTRALIAN POETRY EVENING.

THIS SPECIAL MEETING of THE POETRY SOCIETY will not be held on Monday, Dec. 12th, on account of the General Election. It will take place in January.

The Right Hon. Sir GEO. GE. REID, K.C.M.G., High Commissioner for the Australian Commonwealth (Patron of the Australian Branch of the Poetry Society), will preside.

Details of the programme of representative Australian poetry, selected by J. HENNIKER HEATON, Esq., Jun., will be published in the next issue of the Gazette.

Tickets, including Supper. Members, 3/6 each; Non-members, 5/-.

Members are requested to bring this distinctive meeting to the notice of their Colonial friends.

All applications for tickets should be made to THE POETRY SOCIETY, Clun House, Surrey Street, W.C.

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THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY, AS STATED IN THE CONSTITUTION, ARE

To promote, in the words of Matthew Arnold, adopted as a motto, "a clearer, deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it."

To bring together lovers of poetry with a view to extending and developing the intelligent interest in, and proper appreciation of, poetry.

To form local centres and reading circles and encourage the intelligent reading of verse with due regard to emphasis and rhythm and the poet's meaning, and to study and discuss the art and mission of poetry.

To promote and hold private and public recitals of poetry.

To form sub-societies for the reading and study of the works of individual poets.

To publish such poems by new writers as the Council may decide, and to offer premiums for poetry, and take such steps as may be deemed advisable from time to time to popularise interest in poetry and to assist in bringing about "a poetic renaissance."

To establish lectureships and publish a journal and celebrate and commemorate the birth and death-days of poets, and other literary anniversaries.

The ordinary membership subscription is 5s., with an entrance fee of 2s. 6d.; for schools and "institutional centres" a reduced rate applies.

Honorary members (persons eminent in literature or otherwise distinguished who sympathise with the Society but are not able to take an active part in its work) and vice-presidents (presidents of Centres and distinguished active members) pay a minimum membership subscription of one guinea per annum or a life membership fee of ten guineas.

The Society is intended to bind poetry-readers and lovers together throughout the English speaking world, forming a desirable freemasonry, with poetry—the first and best of all arts—as the connecting link.

By means of local Centres, membership is made active and effective, members meeting together under a President and Council for the reading and study of Poetry and co-operating with Headquarters in the general work of the Society. A member of the Society is a member of the Centre most convenient for him to attend, and a member of any Centre is a member of the Society as a whole and may attend any Centre meetings anywhere on giving notice to the Secretary. This Centre system carries into effect the idea of a poetical freemasonry, a South African member visiting or going to reside in London or South Australia or wherever the Society has a branch being welcomed by and becoming a member of the local group.

Centres or individual members not formed into groups maintain regular communication with the Head Office, from which advice and direction may be obtained with respect to the formation, conduct and programme of Centre meetings, propaganda work, &c., and each Centre is expected to hold at least two public recitals per year with a view to interesting the general public and showing what an exquisite pleasure can be derived from the intelligent reading and speaking of verse.

The Society is the one body dealing with poetry as an ethical and cultural influence of the greatest importance, "redeeming from decay the visitations of the divinity in man," and seeks to bring mankind generally under its influence.

The Society also deals with elocution, and holds periodical examinations of recitals and "auditions" of readers with a view to securing the adoption of better methods and greater attention being given to the technique of reading and speaking. It has also under consideration a scheme for developing its work among schools and colleges.

